

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-01
INR-10 NSAE-00 ICA-20 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06
SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-07 PA-02 /086 W
-----067010 032020Z /64
R 021831Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2665

UNCLAS KINGSTON 6072

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, ETRD, JM

SUBJECT: SMALL BUSINESS SECTOR PROTESTS PROBLEMS IN
GETTING RAW MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT

1. THE SMALL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (SBA) REPRESENTING TRADERS AND MANUFACTURERS, HAS COME OUT STRONGLY AGAINST DELAYS AND DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING LICENSES FOR THE IMPORT OF NEEDED RAW MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT. ACCORDING TO EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION, THE MEMBERS ARE 'FED UP TO THE TEETH' WITH THE LOCAL TRADE ADMINISTRATOR'S DEPARTMENT (TAD) AND THE BANK OF JAMAICA BECAUSE OF THE TREATMENT METED OUT TO THEM BY BOTH GOJ ENTITIES.

2. THE ASSOCIATION HAS THREATENED A TOTAL SHUTDOWN BY SMALL BUSINESSMEN AND A MASSIVE DEMONSTRATION IF THINGS DO NOT IMPROVE.

3. SBA PRESIDENT ASTLEY STONE TOLD NEWSMEN OVER THE WEEKEND THAT BECAUSE OF FAILURE TO OBTAIN LETTERS OF CREDIT FROM THE BANK OF JAMAICA, AND LICENSES FOR IMPORTING RAW MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT FROM THE TRADE ADMINISTRATOR, SOME MEMBERS WERE NOW HAVING TO LAY OFF WORKERS. IN THE CASE OF THE BANK OF JAMAICA, IT WAS SAID, THERE WAS A BACKLOG OF J\$30 MILLION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE CREDIT TO BE
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DEALT WITH WHILE IN THE CASE OF THE TRADE ADMINISTRATOR, IN MANY INSTANCES, LICENSES WERE ISSUED FOR IMPORT OF RAW MATERIALS AND NONE FOR THE EQUIPMENT TO PROCESS THESE RAW MATERIALS. THE CRITICISM WAS THAT THERE WAS A LACK OF COORDINATION WITHIN THE TAD.

4. THE SECRETARY OF SBA, ADOLPH BROWN STATED THAT THE

PROPOSAL TO SET UP A COMPANY TO IMPORT AND DISTRIBUTE RAW MATERIALS AMONG SMALL BUSINESSES, HAD BEEN SET BACK BY THE NEW 10 PER CENT STAMP DUTY AND 27 PER CENT CONSUMPTION TAX.

5. VICE-PRESIDENT BYRON MOORE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT WITHOUT RAW MATERIALS, MANUFACTURERS CANNOT PRODUCE AND FURTHER HOPED THAT THE GOJ WOULD FIND WAYS AND MEANS TO REDRESS WHAT HE CALLED THE 'IMBALANCES.'
IRVING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RAW MATERIALS, DISPUTES, SMALL BUSINESS, TRADE COMPLAINTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KINGST06072
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780318-0909
Format: TEL
From: KINGSTON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197808108/aaaadmqi.tel
Line Count: 72
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fc0e8b58-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1563819
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SMALL BUSINESS SECTOR PROTESTS PROBLEMS IN GETTING RAW MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT
TAGS: ECON, ETRD, JM
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fc0e8b58-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014